771 power to determine the customs of the people.

G. Superstitions and Taboo

784 In spite of the enormous strides made by education in the past three decades, many superstitions and prejudices persist among the Formosan people. They often take the form of taboo or premonitions.

Some uneducated Formosans believe that if a person stumbles on the threshhold of his home just before commencing a journey, danger awaits him en route. To choke while eating presages bad luck. An itching ear is a sign that others are talking about us. The crowing of a rooster at night is a bad omen. Illness and misfortune are punishments sent by angry gods who demand propitiation. An earthquake is caused by the restlessness of a sleeping bull. The dead, especially those who have drowned, are objects of fear. People who waste rice may be struck by lightning.

The aborigines have their own super-
• [826] stitions and taboos. Twins and crippled babies are misfortunes to a family and are allowed to die at birth. Intermarriage among members of the same clan is forbidden. Only members of the immediate family may touch